United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

64th
PLENARY MEETING

Wednesday, 24 November 1993
at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 33 *(continued)*

QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/48/264 and Add.1, Add.2 and Add.2/Corr.1, Add.3 and Add.4)

(b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/48/L.28)

Mr. KHARRAZI (Islamic Republic of Iran): The favourable international atmosphere of the post-cold-war era provides a unique opportunity to test the ability of the United Nations to achieve a conflict-free world based on justice and the rule of law. With the present fundamental changes in the international arena, there is renewed hope that the United Nations will ultimately be able to function smoothly and effectively, as envisaged by its founders. The ongoing struggle to restructure and reinvigorate the United Nations is aimed at providing the Organization with the machinery it needs to preserve and enhance the role and the credibility it gained following the Kuwait crisis. Deciding on adoption of the draft resolution before the Assembly on the re-evaluation of the composition of the Security Council should be viewed in that context. The Security Council, a principal organ of the United Nations, with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, needs to adapt to the new circumstances.

A review of the functioning of the Security Council in the recent turbulent years suggests that the Council has yet to grapple with the question of fulfilling its responsibilities as framed by the founders of the Organization. As we have stated on earlier occasions, the Council has been unable to deal with all regional conflicts promptly and effectively as it should under the terms of Article 24 of the Charter. It has continued to apply a double standard in dealing with issues relating to peace and security in different parts of the world.

The lack of transparency in the work of the Council is yet another flaw. Secrecy in the work of the Council runs against the spirit of openness and democracy within the United Nations, which, as the Secretary-General observed in his report "An Agenda for Peace", requires the fullest consultation, participation and engagement of all States, large and small, in the work of the Organization.

The increase in the membership of the United Nations necessitates a new balance between the General Assembly and the Security Council. It cannot and should not be sidelined in cases of threats to international peace and security.

These flaws, coupled with the increase in the membership of the United Nations, strengthen the argument for reviewing the membership of the Security Council. It must be emphasized, however, that expanded membership of the Council is not an end in itself, but is rather a means for improving the way in which the Council functions and discharges its responsibilities. In our opinion, any change in the Council's composition will have to meet the following criteria: the sovereign equality of States, the cornerstone of the Organization, should always be safeguarded; the principle of equitable geographical distribution, enshrined in the Charter, should be observed;

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93-87267 (E)

Distr. GENERAL

A/48/PV.64
7 December 1993

ENGLISH

a rotation mechanism needs to be set up to enable all peace-loving States to become members of the Council and to participate in its activities; members of the Council, like any other Members of the Organization, should always abide by the provisions of the Charter and the principles of international law.

The General Assembly's vote of confidence in non-permanent members of the Council, as required by Article 23, paragraph 2, should continue to apply as a check-and-balance mechanism. This mechanism should be preserved, and should be extended to the potential new members as well.

The objective of adjusting the Council to the new circumstances cannot be realized by a mere review of its composition; it must be accompanied by measures to improve the Council's working methods. To address these concerns, the rules of procedure of the Council must be reviewed as well.

The time is propitious to review that undemocratic mechanism for decision-making in the Security Council - the veto power. This procedure, introduced by the victorious Powers in 1945, has lost its *raison d'être* as a consequence of the dramatic changes in international relations. The veto power, therefore, should be abolished and replaced by a democratic decision-making procedure.

I wish now to comment on the procedural aspects of the important task of enlarging the Security Council. In our opinion, an inter-sessional open-ended working group needs to be established to study the various proposals received from States or submitted to the working group on enlarging the Council and improving its working methods. The working group should be mandated to recommend generally accepted suggestions on the future composition of the Council as well as on its working methods.

Finally, I wish to assure you, Mr. President, that the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran will cooperate constructively to carry out the mandate entrusted to the General Assembly.

Mr. PAK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is of the view that the United Nations and, in particular, the Security Council should be restructured in order to fulfil their functions in strengthening international peace and security.

Under the changed circumstances, the international community has the common task of building an independent, peaceful and prosperous new world on our planet to meet the demands of a new era of *rapprochement* and cooperation. In order to fulfil its obligations and responsibilities before history and to humankind, the United Nations should be restructured on a democratic basis.

The cold war has ended, but the cold-war-era structure of the United Nations remains unchanged, although the international community confronts new challenges. With a view to coping effectively with changing realities and new challenges, the Security Council should be democratically reformed and the functions of the General Assembly strengthened.

In reforming the Security Council on a democratic basis, all Member States should be allowed to fully exercise their sovereignty on an equal footing, regardless of differences in the size, and whether strong or weak, rich or poor. All nations are equal members of international society and are entitled to equal rights. The non-aligned and other developing countries, which constitute a majority of the United Nations membership, are making a great contribution to the resolution of major international issues.

The composition of the Security Council and representation should be reviewed and readjusted with particular attention to those aspects. The present composition of the Security Council is such that the East and West European regions occupy almost half the seats, while the non-aligned countries are not afforded a permanent seat. The Security Council should be expanded in line with the increasing United Nations membership, and Council seats should be allocated on the basis of the principle of equitable geographical representation.

It is the view of my delegation that, in order to reflect that equitable geographical representation, when the membership is increased two or three of the new seats should be given to each of the regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and permanent seats on the Security Council should be allocated to the non-aligned countries.

In the discussions on restructuring the Security Council, attention should be given to reviewing relations between the General Assembly and the Security Council, and their respective functions, for the effective assurance of international peace and security. Since the Security Council takes measures and actions on behalf of the entire United Nations membership, the Council should be accountable to the General Assembly for its major policy decisions.

At the same time, it is necessary to take certain measures to allow the General Assembly also to take up major issues related to international peace and security, so that the balance between the General Assembly and the

Security Council is assured. The views of the entire United Nations membership should be reflected in the decision-making process relating to international peace and security. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea therefore supports the establishment of a working group, with the participation of all Member States, to discuss the reform of the Security Council.

My delegation hopes that by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations the restructuring of the Organization, and particularly the reform of the Security Council, will have been carried out in conformity with the interests of the entire membership, so that the United Nations can make a more effective contribution to ensuring international peace and security.

Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea): My delegation welcomes this opportunity to take part in the crucial debate on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. At the outset, we extend our thanks and congratulations to the Secretary-General for his report, which serves as a basis for further debate on this very important issue.

My delegation has taken good note of the contributions made so far by other Member States on this item, as we believe that the reform of the Security Council is timely and must come as part of the overall reform of the United Nations system as a whole.

The Security Council was established to provide for the effective maintenance of global peace and security, in order to prevent conflicts from escalating into any further world wars. At that time the membership of the United Nations was less than one third of its current number. The Council's last enlargement was in 1963, when the Organization's membership had risen to 113. Today the United Nations enjoys an almost universal membership of 184 countries.

Therefore, we are of the strong view that there is total agreement among the members in this Hall that the Security Council should be expanded to maintain equitable representation and reflect the nature and extent of geopolitical representation on a regional basis. While there is universal agreement for an expanded Security Council, my delegation believes that there should be broad consultation and debate to arrive at a widely acceptable formula for equitable representation on and participation in the Security Council.

My Government supports and associates itself with the recognition by Member States that the questions of equitable representation on the Security Council and increase in its membership are an integral and important component of reforming the United Nations system as a whole in order to make it more responsive to the post-cold-war need for a better and more secure world.

My delegation recognizes that the question of expanding the Security Council cannot be resolved without addressing its voting procedure and, more important, without modifying the existing veto power of the current permanent members of the Council. Hence, we welcome wide consultations by Member States to find an acceptable formula for a modified voting procedure to suit rapidly changing times.

We look forward to further debate on this question and hope that an acceptable outcome will be put in place by 1995 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. In this regard, my delegation supports the suggestion that an openended working group should be established to consider all aspects of the question of increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council.

As the United Nations crosses the threshold of a new era in the twenty-first century, the decisions of an expanded Security Council, in fair representation of the membership of the General Assembly, will legitimize its primary object of maintaining global peace and security.

Mr. MERIMEE (France) *(interpretation from French)*: The question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, having been on the agenda of the General Assembly since its thirty-fourth session, is not a new one. However, since the forty-seventh session most delegations have taken the view that the time has come to increase the membership of the Council in response to the new international situation and the increase in the number of Member States.

As our Minister for Foreign Affairs reminded the Assembly on 29 September last from this rostrum, France understands and supports the aspirations of some of its partners to exercise their international responsibilities more actively. We also believe that the increase in the number of Member States of the Organization suggests that we should contemplate an expansion of the Security Council, taking into account both the legitimate concern for geographical balance and the need to preserve the Council's ability to act swiftly and effectively. The balance established under Article 23 of the Charter, as modified by the resolution of 17 December 1963, which entered into force on 31 August 1965, in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 108 of the Charter, has, so far, satisfactorily met these concerns for equity and effectiveness. Over the last few years the Security Council

has thus been able to perform well the task entrusted to it under the Charter.

We further consider that the Security Council's contribution to the maintenance of peace has never been so great and that it is one of the major factors behind the credibility of the United Nations in the world today. It would be paradoxical if at the very moment when the spirit of the Charter can for the first time be truly respected, the principles of the Charter were to be indirectly challenged.

It is also true that we should avoid the suspicion that this Organization is not taking sufficiently into account the increase in the number of its Member States and the concomitant risk that the full complexity of certain problems in the world might be inadequately understood. We must therefore enable the Council to continue to act efficaciously tomorrow, as it does today, on behalf of all the Members of the United Nations, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter.

Today, an increase in the membership of the Council, along with the appropriate functional adjustments, seems to us necessary, and it should be carried out in compliance with the relevant provisions of the Charter. Whatever the outcome, we must bear in mind that the special responsibility borne by the permanent members obliges them to see to it at all times that the purposes of the Organization are safeguarded.

In addition, France hopes that account will be taken of the new importance of certain States in international life, not only because of their economic development but also because of their willingness to play an active role by discharging throughout the world responsibilities that transcend their own particular interests, especially through their participation in peace-keeping operations. We also hope that the possible admission of new permanent members will not limit opportunities for other States from different regions to participate in the Council's work as non-permanent members.

France is prepared to participate in the working group to be set up by the Assembly to submit recommendations on this subject. We hope that the group's sufficiently clear and specific mandate will preclude the endless discussions that would delay the drawing up of realistic solutions.

For that reason, my country expresses its deep gratitude to the Permanent Representative of Singapore, whose efforts and wisdom have made it possible to produce a draft resolution that is at once open and reasonable.

It is in this spirit of open-mindedness that France will approach the subsequent work on this subject, which deserves the participation of all of us in building the future of our Organization.

Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic) *(interpretation from French)*: In its wisdom, the General Assembly last year adopted by consensus resolution 47/62, on the question of equitable representation on and increase of the membership of the Security Council. The Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomed the adoption of that resolution, which, it believes, marked a crucial stage in the international community's efforts to revitalize and restructure the United Nations and its principal organs. Along with other delegations, the Lao delegation intends to make a positive contribution to the debate on this very important question.

During this new era, as we witness the emergence of new power structures and a large increase in the number of Members of our Organization, it is fitting that the international community pay special attention to the questions of equitable representation on the Security Council and of an increase in the number of its members. As the organ that has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should be able to function effectively, in the interest of all nations and peoples of the world, powerful or weak, large or small, rich or poor. In this debate, my country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, wishes to make the following comments to our Assembly.

In principle, we are in favour of an increase in the membership of the Council, with regard to both permanent and non-permanent members. With regard to new permanent members, we think that Germany and Japan, because of their unquestionable political and economic weight, are capable of fulfilling the role of permanent members of the Council once it has been enlarged and of contributing to the historic task of preserving and maintaining international peace and security. As for the non-permanent members, we believe that their number should also increase so that the Council will embody a more just and balanced representation, in view of the immense change that has taken place in international relations.

In that context, we welcome the idea that the medium- and small-sized States, which make up the great majority of the States Members of our Organization, should be well represented on the Council so that their voices can be heard and their cause defended. In short, the Council thus enlarged, composed of a very restricted number of members equitably representing the various regional groups - Africa, Asia, Western Europe, Eastern Europe,

Latin America and the Caribbean - would be fully capable of playing its role as the principal guarantor of international peace and security.

No less important is the question of the transparency of the work of the Council. In the opinion of the Lao delegation, effective action by the Security Council presupposes the participation of all States Members of the Organization in the discussions or debates on all items on its agenda before decisions are taken. Informal consultations should take place only in certain sensitive cases which are extremely delicate, and in so far as possible it would be desirable for the records of such consultations to be made available to all States Members of the Organization. In this way, the decision-making process of the Council would take place in a healthy, transparent and accessible environment.

With regard to the method of decision-making, we are, in principle, in favour of the implementation of any democratic formula. However, a thorough analysis of this issue, taking into account the realities of the present world political chessboard is necessary. The Lao delegation will join in any consensus that may emerge with regard to this complex question.

These are the few comments which we wished humbly to submit to the Assembly. This is a question of major importance for all of us, one which affects the future of our world in this new era, and therefore it should not be dragged out. Together with other delegations, the Lao delegation will spare no effort to make a sincere contribution to this debate. Together, and inspired with a solid will to preserve world peace, we hope to achieve the ultimate objective we have set ourselves.

The PRESIDENT: I would like to inform the Assembly that the representatives of Panama and Zambia have asked to participate in the debate on this item. Inasmuch as the list of speakers was closed yesterday at 12 noon, I must ask the Assembly whether there is any objection to the inclusion of these delegations in the list of speakers.

As I see none, Panama and Zambia will be included on the list.

It was so decided.

Mr. FULCI (Italy): Italy looks forward to the establishment of an open-ended working group on the question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council. In today's world, this essential organ of the United Nations is called on to play an unprecedented and crucial role. Needless to say, it is not enough to increase its size: the Security Council must also be made more representative and more authoritative. To this end, much work and the broadest possible agreement will be needed, no matter how long, complicated or tiring the process.

All Member States must be a part of this exercise; the Security Council should be perceived not as a distant body but as an instrument that constitutes one of the international community's most important political expressions.

When we approached the problem in various informal gatherings over the course of the past few months, two schools of thought clearly emerged. The first wanted to limit reform to the simple matter of increasing the membership of the Security Council. Others were rather in favour of using this occasion for an in-depth review of other matters, including criteria for the enlargement of the Security Council, transparency, effectiveness and relations between the Security Council, the General Assembly and the other competent United Nations organs.

Italy basically shares this second view, and we strongly favour including matters related to the Security Council's functioning in the mandate of the working group. Furthermore, it is our sentiment that all countries, without exception, should voice their opinion on a matter so vital to the future of the United Nations.

Membership in the Security Council is at present limited to two categories, namely, permanent members, which played a key role in the creation of the United Nations after the Second World War and which hold the power of veto, a power that we fervently hope will become obsolete through non-use and the passage of time; and, secondly, non-permanent members. Every country in the United Nations has the right and the duty to serve on the Security Council, thus bringing to it the often-outstanding talents and experience of its leaders and delegations.

But perhaps there is room and a need for a third category of members. It is generally agreed that some States are able to make a more significant contribution to achieving the goals of the United Nations. Those countries should be allowed to play a greater role in working towards our common objectives. It is in this perspective that - without wishing to prejudge in any way the working group's findings - I would call attention to Italy's specific proposals in response to the Secretary-General's questionnaire, which were also mentioned in the statement by the Italian Foreign Minister, Beniamino Andreatta, to the General Assembly.

The core of our proposal is to leave the traditional categories unaltered and to establish a third category of

semi-permanent members. This would mean identifying a group of some 20 Member States on the basis of objective criteria that would include economic factors, human resources, culture, mass communications and so on. Countries meeting those criteria would serve alternatively on the Security Council in biennial rotation. The total number of seats in the Council would in no case exceed 25 - that is to say, a manageable number that could still ensure its proper functioning.

We have carefully listened to preceding speakers and noted with satisfaction that some of them have suggested concepts not unlike our own. In particular, I wish to refer to the statement by the Permanent Representative of Egypt, Ambassador Elaraby, who mentioned a possible formula establishing one or more seats without veto power for each region, to rotate between the main countries of that region.

A reform on this basis would have the merit of making the Council more representative and more effective. Moreover, once the countries entitled to such rotation are grouped in a separate category a more democratic presence of all Member States would be facilitated.

In closing I wish to inform the Assembly that my delegation plans to contribute actively to the working group, aware as we are of the need for a just and equitable reform of the Security Council.

Mr. NOTERDAEME (Belgium)*(interpretation from French)*: In recent years the Security Council has regained its ability to exercise its functions under the United Nations Charter in the maintenance of international peace and security. It has done so effectively owing to the spirit of consensus that has often prevailed among its members. That regained effectiveness has also been the result of the desire of States Members of the United Nations to contribute to the implementation of the Security Council's decisions with regard to the maintenance of peace.

The increase in the number of Members of the United Nations and the new international political landscape have created a wish to enlarge the Council's composition to adapt it to the new configuration of the international community. Along with this wish to improve the Security Council's representativeness, the multiplicity and diversity of sources of tensions and conflicts have strengthened the desire to adapt the Council.

Belgium, along with other Members of the United Nations, agrees that there is a need to reform the Council's composition. Based on our recent two-year experience during which we participated in the Council's activities as a non-permanent member, we will take an active part in the work to bring about reform.

Belgium believes that reform of the composition of the Security Council should be conceived realistically and lead, in that framework, to a strengthening of the Council's regained effectiveness. The ever increasing calls upon the United Nations clearly reflects the expectations that Member States that are prey to tensions or conflicts are placing in the Security Council. In order to respond appropriately to that legitimate expectation, Belgium believes that work on the increase in the membership of the Security Council should be focused on three main points.

First, it is essential that the international community deem itself properly represented in the Council. However, that must not work against the Council's effectiveness, which could be endangered by an ill-considered increase in the number of its members. We must therefore also examine the possibility of a limited increase in the number of the Council's non-permanent members to satisfy the wish for improved representativeness for certain regional groups without impinging upon the Council's effectiveness.

Secondly, it would seem indispensable to strengthen the Council's political, military and financial capital, to which the permanent members are already contributing. To that end we might envisage the addition as permanent members of States that could effectively carry out the special responsibilities inherent in that status. Such increases should be compatible with the basic need I have already mentioned to maintain the Council's effectiveness.

Thirdly, and in the context of augmenting political, military and financial capital, it would obviously be desirable for the non-permanent members, whose constant and substantial military and financial contributions serve to support the implementation of the Council's decisions, to be suitably represented. Indeed, the desire to contribute to the maintenance of international peace deserves adequate representation in the Security Council for those that share it. Further, we must examine the possibility of developing working methods that, without restricting the Council's competence and responsibilities, would allow for the establishment, through its subsidiary committees, of functional relationships with Members of the Organization directly involved in the Council's actions.

The General Assembly should adopt a draft resolution to set up an open-ended working group. Belgium will participate in the work of the group in a spirit of open-mindedness. It hopes that this work will facilitate the beginning of a reform of the composition of the Security Council, conducted without haste and in a spirit of

consensus. The shape of the international community has changed considerably in the last few years, as have the nature and the sources of tension and conflict. Faced with these changes, the Security Council must adapt in order to fulfil the mandate given it by the States Members of the United Nations.

To that end, the Member States should consider the question of the composition of the Council in a spirit of realism, with a view to securing the greatest degree of representativeness and an increase in the Council's capacity for action.

Mr. INDERFURTH (United States of America): The United States Government welcomed the adoption of resolution 47/62 on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, and today the United States is pleased to be able to support the draft resolution that is the subject of our debate. It is the product of broad and constructive discussions that took place over several weeks and were informed by the many valuable comments of General Assembly members on this agenda item. In addition, those discussions benefited from an abiding desire to reach consensus - an ingredient that will be even more important to the success of the working group proposed in the draft resolution.

As with all institutions, the United Nations must be capable of evolving to respond to fundamental changes in the world around it. It is almost 30 years since the membership of the Security Council was last adjusted - in 1965 - and the world has indeed changed a great deal in that time. It is appropriate that the Security Council should reflect the changes. The United States was an early proponent and remains a firm supporter of adjusting the Council in order to reflect the political, economic and security realities of today's world, while taking care to ensure its continued capacity and effectiveness.

The question of increasing the membership of the Security Council has evoked broad interest from many Members. This interest reflects the increasingly vital role that the Security Council has come to play in maintaining and promoting international peace and security. The end of the cold war has ushered in an exciting new period of change, full of new opportunities and new challenges. All around the globe the United Nations and the Security Council are engaged - and often in the forefront - in dealing with these opportunities and challenges.

Now that the Security Council has finally begun to play the role envisioned for it by the founders, it is essential that we ensure that any changes enhance, rather than detract from, the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council. We recognize that many issues will be discussed in the open-ended working group proposed in the draft resolution, but we also believe that the working group can best achieve the goal of strengthening the Council by concentrating its efforts on the primary issue before it - namely, expansion of the Council in a manner that will best contribute to its effective operation.

We believe that a modest and appropriate enlargement of the Security Council should be the unifying theme of our effort, and we urge all Member States to accept that goal as our common purpose.

We believe that the revitalization of certain organs of the United Nations should be a continuing process directed at preserving their capacity and effectiveness in the light of changing circumstances. In this spirit, we very much look forward to working with the other members of the General Assembly to devise practical, generally acceptable plans for a more effective Council.

Mr. LOZINSKIY (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian)*: The delegation of the Russian Federation believes that consideration of the agenda item concerning expansion of the membership of the Security Council should take place within the framework of the overall task of adapting the United Nations to the political, economic, social and other realities of today's world. With regard to membership of the Security Council, it is important, therefore, that we be guided by the provisions of the Charter whereby due regard should be specially paid to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution.

We regard it as a matter of high priority that in its discussions and work the forthcoming open-ended working group should not be turned into an arena for political friction and confrontation. The proliferation of conflicts in the world and the involvement of the United Nations in their settlement are such that we cannot afford a potentially paralysing major overhaul of machinery that not only is not broken but is actually functioning smoothly.

In recent years - for the first time in many decades - the Security Council has been working systematically, in total compliance with the Charter, as the organ bearing the main responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council can now claim credit for quite a number of successful United Nations peace-keeping operations, as well as for quite a few important decisions aimed at preventing or settling crises and conflicts and at strengthening stability and security in various parts of the world.

It is no accident that the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization points out that the pattern of the Council's operations is now

> "akin to that of a task force dealing with situations as they arise, on an almost continuing basis." *(A/48/1, para. 37)*

An extremely important consideration in any steps that may be taken must be to strengthen the Council's recently acquired efficiency and effectiveness in its actions.

We recognize the real need for broad reliance by the Security Council, in taking its decisions, on the opinions of members of the world community. We therefore believe that, for these purposes, full use should be made of all the potential to be found in the Charter.

We are convinced that further improvement of the functioning of the Security Council must be undertaken with the greatest care and without haste. To this end, what is necessary is work, within the framework of the Council itself, to produce agreed conceptual bases and practical measures for the maintenance and enhancement of its role as the central organ of the United Nations entrusted with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Russia is ready to cooperate constructively with all interested States on all these matters, in the belief that any progress in this area should be made on a step-by-step, consensus basis. We support draft resolution A/48/L.28 and look forward to its adoption by consensus.

Mr. ABDUL GHAFFAR (Bahrain) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: The report of the Secretary-General of the Organization, which was prepared according to General Assembly resolution 47/62 concerning the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, reflects the importance the Organization's Member States attach to this question. We conclude from the views that are being put forth that the inevitability of change in the Security Council at a time when the world stands on the threshold of the twenty-first century is a matter of agreement amongst the majority of Member States and a prerequisite for ensuring that the Council will be more effective in dealing with new international problems.

Our view of such change should be based on a principal consideration, namely the main task of the Security Council is the maintenance of international peace and security and world stability. Proceeding from this, it is of paramount importance to keep in view the fact that equitable representation and increased membership are prerequisites in the area of enhancing the effectiveness of the Security Council.

The onus of responsibility in this respect is on the permanent members of the Security Council, which should have the necessary political will and the ability to do all that is necessary in the best interests of the United Nations and the maintenance of international peace and security. We believe that it is essential that the working group that will be established by the General Assembly should discuss and deliberate on the issue of reinforcing the effectiveness of the Security Council on the basis of the following: first, the need to initiate the process of building the practical basis of the collective security system envisioned by Article 43 of the Charter through the elaboration of definitive measures to maintain peace and security in the world; secondly, the importance of reinforcing a machinery to settle conflicts in the world as provided for in Article 33 of the Charter; and, thirdly, the need to formulate certain norms for the definition of the grave situations that threaten peace, compromise stability, and constitute aggression, so that the Security Council may avoid selectivity in dealing with international problems.

The events of the past three years have shown that while the Security Council dealt with certain international conflicts in a decidedly resolute manner, it has not dealt with Serbian aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina and that this failure to act has led to the proliferation of crimes of ethnic extermination, rape and the displacement of thousands of Muslims in the Balkans. Consequently, the reinforcement of the effectiveness of the Security Council, especially through the development of the system of collective security as envisioned in Chapter VII of the Charter, is a vital issue especially for the security of the small States that constitute the majority of the Organization's membership.

As regards increasing the membership of the Security Council, we believe that the Council, with its present composition, no longer equitably represents the Member States of the United Nations, which now number 184. Over the past few years, there has been an increasing awareness of the lack of proportion between the composition of the Council and the membership of the United Nations. Therefore, we support in principle increasing the membership of the Security Council. In this respect, however, two important points must be taken into account: first, respect for the principle of sovereign equality without infringement on the rights of any State under the Charter; secondly, the importance of taking into account the need for equitable geographical representation.

There has been an increasing feeling over the past few years among most Member States that the relationship

between the Security Council and the General Assembly has lost a great deal of balance, a matter that runs counter to the spirit of Article 24 of the Charter which stipulates that:

> "In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security ...".

In this respect, we propose that the working group which will be formed by the General Assembly should deal with this question objectively so that a feeling will not be created among most members that the Security Council and the General Assembly are pulling in two different directions, like two parallel lines that will never be equidistant.

Mr. KEATING (New Zealand): The reform of the Security Council has provoked considerable discussion during this session of the General Assembly. New Zealand welcomes this discussion. It is healthy and it is overdue.

New Zealand has a very strong commitment to the principle of collective security. Small and even medium-sized countries are unable alone to ensure their own security. They need to rely on a system of collective security. The Charter of the United Nations set up such a system, and one of its cornerstones is the Security Council.

It is a fact that collective security issues have become much more complex since 1945, and especially in the past few years. We are at a turning-point in history and the challenge for the United Nations is to ensure that the structures of the United Nations are capable of measuring up to the increasingly complex challenges laid before them.

Much reform is already under way within the United Nations system. But New Zealand is convinced that at this time it is also essential to review the Articles of the Charter relating to the Security Council. The increase in the number of Member States in the United Nations and the changing international dynamics have resulted in a Security Council that is now in danger of losing credibility within the wider international community.

We are looking, first, for an increase in the membership of the Council. We believe that around 21 member States would better reflect the current membership of the United Nations and we consider that it would not jeopardize the Council's ability to work both efficiently and effectively.

Secondly, we are of the view that it may be possible to contemplate a very small increase in the number of permanent members of the Security Council. However we would oppose any such change that would lessen the opportunities for the overwhelming majority of States which have no entitlement to such permanent seats. Also in our view there should be clear prerequisites for any potential new permanent members. There should be a commitment to an active role in the maintenance of international peace and security, including a willingness to commit substantial forces to both peace-keeping and peace enforcement.

Thirdly, and bearing in mind the views expressed by many Members of the United Nations on the question of additional permanent seats, we consider that there would also be merit in the working group's considering, for example, the concept of regional representation, including the possibility of States being elected to represent regional groupings, possibly for longer than present terms; or the possibility of amending Article 23.2 of the Charter so that non-permanent members could sit for more than one term on the Council, in succession, if elected to do so.

Fourthly, New Zealand believes very strongly in the right of small countries to participate equally with large ones in the Security Council. We therefore continue to oppose any extension of veto rights. We argued against the veto when the Charter was written, and we will not support its expansion today.

Making the Council more relevant to today's membership and protecting its integrity, authority and effectiveness are surely priorities. An increase in the size of the Council would make it more representative. However, the equity and efficiency of the Council are also products of its processes. New Zealand would welcome measures to increase the transparency of the Council's decision-making. Indeed, New Zealand has already made formal proposals to that effect to the Security Council itself. We have also proposed mechanisms within the Council for longer-term planning and wider, more transparent, consultation with Member States.

Consultation, where appropriate, with States that are not members of the Council is already contemplated by the Charter. But in our view these provisions need reform also. Better consultation would facilitate the work of the Council, not frustrate it. With this in mind we would favour some clarification of Articles 31 and 44. We are also particularly interested in this regard in ensuring improved provision for drawing on the experience of troop-contributing States. Again, New Zealand has made specific proposals to this effect in document S/26444.

In conclusion, let me say that we warmly welcome the establishment of an open-ended working group. We

support the draft resolution in document A/48/L.28, and we strongly urge its adoption by consensus. We consider that the working group will be most effective if a determined effort is made to achieve consensus. However, we do not believe that it would be constructive for the working group to be bound by a strict rule of consensus. We are opposed to the idea of vetoes in the Council, and we are equally opposed to vetoes on reform. We believe that the Members of the United Nations should be seeking above all to use this opportunity to enhance the legitimacy and the moral authority of the Security Council. That means in our view that any amendments to the Charter that are eventually adopted must enjoy very broad support by the overwhelming majority of Members of the United Nations, in the light of the Charter's requirements for entry into force of amendments.

Mr. TURK (Slovenia): In considering at this time the "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council", the General Assembly is devoting itself to one of the most necessary improvements in the United Nations system. Today the United Nations consists of 184 Member States, as opposed to the 51 States which signed the United Nations Charter in 1945 and the 113 which amended the Charter in 1965, when the number of non-permanent members of the Security Council was increased to its present level. In view of these comparisons, it would seem obvious that the time has come for a further, rational increase in the membership of the Security Council, and that the necessary revision of the Charter should enter into force by 1995.

Expansion of the United Nations membership is not the only or the most important reason for careful consideration of an increase in the membership and of reform of the Security Council. Other reasons are at least equally important. All Member States are aware of political changes that have taken place in recent years and of the experience gained through the efforts of the Security Council to respond to various problems that have arisen in those circumstances. All this calls for careful reflection and decision conducive to meaningful reform. Therefore it seems necessary to identify the main characteristics of the present situation which calls for change in the membership and working methods of the Security Council.

The pace and far-reaching nature of the changes that have occurred in recent years have been unprecedented, and very often the Security Council has had to respond rapidly. The methods that have thus evolved are a set of ad hoc responses to circumstances rather than a result of careful reflection and long-term planning. The body of practice that has evolved in the last three years is therefore richer and more diverse than the patterns developed by the Security Council during preceding decades.

True, the Security Council was conceived as an instrument "to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations", as stipulated in Article 24 of the Charter, and it must therefore act promptly and on a case-by-case basis. However, the problems inherent in this approach should not be underestimated, particularly at a time when the Council has embarked upon the ambitious path of active involvement in a wide variety of situations.

Careful reflection is necessary in situations that may involve a threat to peace and, consequently, justify enforcement measures under Chapter VII of the Charter. The need for careful reflection and coherent practice is particularly important in cases where a threat to peace results from a situation within the territory of a single State. The experience gained through the Security Council's action with respect to such situations as Angola, Somalia and Haiti has demonstrated the need for a carefully thought-out approach which has to be developed prior to considering a situation within the frontiers of a single State as a threat to peace or as otherwise justifying action under Chapter VII. The basic problem here could be formulated in the following question: In an effort to reach a political settlement, how are we to combine such basic elements as, first, the requirement of the legitimacy of political solutions and, secondly, recognition of de facto forces that have to be brought into the arrangement in order to make it effective? Consistency in the answers to this question will be necessary.

The same quest for consistency is relevant also with respect to situations involving the use of force among States. Recent experience suggests that the Security Council has not always been able to speak up clearly in protection of weaker States against various forms of armed aggression by stronger neighbours. It is important to note that little use has been made of the definition of aggression adopted by the General Assembly in 1974. Let us, in passing, recall that the definition of aggression identifies a variety of forms of armed attack by the armed forces of one State against another State, including such activity as sending, on behalf of a State, armed groups which carry out acts of armed force against another State - acts whose gravity is comparable to that of other, more direct forms of aggression. Instead, in some cases, the element of internal conflict, while apparently present, was overemphasized and the element of aggression downplayed - to the level which made action under Chapter VII inappropriate.

In such situations, the elusive concepts of "civil war" and "ethnic conflict" have begun to be used in a manner that distorts the facts and prevents the use of the measures at the disposal of the Security Council. The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina comes immediately to mind: the fact that the forces of aggression in that situation have not yet

abandoned the hope that their aggression will eventually be rewarded continues to cause concern.

It should perhaps be emphasized in connection with these problems that action under Chapter VII does not necessarily involve military measures or economic sanctions. A clear identification of acts of aggression and of aggressors, in particular in the early stages, may suffice. Moreover, it can be assumed that the effective political isolation of a State responsible for acts of aggression can, if pursued thoroughly, be an important weapon at the disposal of the Security Council.

Issues such as these invite the question of how an increase in the membership of the Security Council could make the Council's actions more coherent and more effective. A very general answer to this general question would be that a reasonable expansion would increase the transparency and enhance the legitimacy of the Council's work. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that the shortcomings which I mentioned a few moments ago have at least one common denominator: the difficulty of reducing the element of national interest involved in the work of the Security Council.

It is reasonable to assume that an appropriate expansion would create a new and more adequate balance within the Council and would thus enhance its role as an organ that acts on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations and as an organ in which national interests do not prevail over the interests of the international community as a whole.

Here, a general thought on the relationship between the concept of effectiveness and that of legitimacy might be appropriate. It is generally accepted that an increase in the membership of the Security Council should not prejudice its effectiveness and efficiency. In other words, the increase should be modest. On the other hand, however, the increase should be sufficient to represent a meaningful step towards a genuine representative character and to rally Member States' effective support for the Council's actions.

In order to act effectively, the Security Council should act in a manner that commands the very broad support, or - if at all possible - a consensus of United Nations Member States. An appropriate increase in the membership of the Security Council could therefore - if it is appropriately designed - serve as a method both of enhancing the Council's legitimacy and of strengthening its effectiveness.

An important element in this vision of an enlarged Security Council is the need to preserve the current ratio of permanent to non-permanent members. The present ratio is appropriate, and should be retained in an expanded Council.

While an increase in membership and the preservation of the current ratio of permanent to non-permanent members seem generally acceptable - and perhaps even common sense - some other ideas require careful reflection. This is true, for example, of the idea of introducing new permanent members in the Security Council without the right of veto, and of the idea of deleting the rule of the non-eligibility of a retiring member for re-election to the Security Council. Both of these ideas could be described as making the functioning of the system more complicated, and the election of new members of the Security Council more difficult.

The exceptions to the principle of the sovereign equality of all Member States, expressed, at present, in the form of the special status of the permanent members of the Security Council, should not be multiplied by the addition of new and open-ended exceptions.

The new permanent members of the Security Council should have a status equal to that of the present members, and should be chosen from amongst Members that can make a genuinely outstanding contribution, including, in particular, a contribution to financing the Security Council's operations.

Adequate geographical representation, on the other hand, should be sought through the composition of the Security Council as a whole. Let me emphasize that the question of equitable geographical representation, while important in the context of the present discussion, is of wider relevance for the future of the United Nations system as a whole. The present regional arrangement was established many years ago in a different political reality, and is today outdated in some important respects. The former political divisions that shaped it no longer exist, and the importance of subregional groups is steadily growing. This calls for a general re-evaluation of the regional groups, which is something that could be pursued in another context, perhaps as part of the discussions on the preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. What needs to be said today, however, is in fact a statement of the obvious: an increase in the membership of the Security Council will gain its full meaning only after the reform of the system of regional groups. Only then will the system provide all the necessary conditions for the Security Council to be properly representative.

It is important for the discussion on an increase in the membership of the Security Council to remain focused on the issue at hand - that is, on determining an approach leading to an appropriate increase in the number of

permanent and non-permanent members. Slovenia supports the proposal to establish a working group, and the draft resolution that you, Mr. President, have placed before the General Assembly.

Other, related questions should be addressed not only by that working group but - many of them - in other forums, including within the Security Council itself. There is no reason why the Council should not, as matter of priority, take up the question of establishing a system for consulting with the United Nations Member States before it takes decisions. A carefully designed system of consultation with Member States that are not members of the Council could increase transparency and thus remove some of the misgivings about the Council's present *modus operandi*. Moreover, such a system could make a substantial contribution to enhancing the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council's work, which is the principal objective of the current efforts to increase the Council's membership.

On the other hand, the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations should, as a matter of priority, proceed with proposals for eliminating the obsolete provisions in Articles 53 and 107 of the Charter concerning the so-called enemy States. Eliminating these provisions would mark an acceptance of present realities in the international community and would identify the United Nations as an organization of the future.

Let me conclude by reiterating Slovenia's commitment to the Charter of the United Nations. In the present rapidly changing world, every effort must be made to ensure that the practical work of the United Nations corresponds to the aspirations expressed in the Charter.

Mr. LAING (Belize): Many representatives have spoken, both yesterday and today, and have clearly reiterated what Governments have long and repeatedly urged: there must be equitable representation on the Organization's Security Council.

Equitable representation goes beyond the equitable geographical representation mentioned as a criterion for non-permanent membership in Article 23 of the Charter. Equitable representation, which resolution 47/62 seeks, is nothing less than democratization.

The United Nations has now attained such commanding global authority that it is increasingly recognized that it has a mandate to facilitate democracy for the peoples of Member States even over the objections of Governments. In fact, in the current debate on the proposed establishment of the post of high commissioner for human rights, some have mentioned the possibility that one of the functions of that office might be support for electoral democracy. If the Organization can have such large aspirations, surely it must subject its own processes to democratic principles.

Thus we must swiftly ensure that democracy is enshrined in representation on the Security Council. The operational criteria for that democracy must include not only such factors as the level of financial contributions, but also numerous other factors, such as population size. At the same time, even small nations, especially those that are strategically located, must be represented, even in the highest ranks. Our Government has set out such criteria at greater length in a paper circulated in the report of the Secretary-General *(A/48/264/Add.3)*.

When we speak about equitable representation, we refer to both non-permanent and permanent membership. In the case of non-permanent membership, we explicitly endorse the concept of regional membership put forward by many delegations. As far as permanent membership is concerned, the delegation of Belize recognizes that, on strict principle and logic, arguments can be made against the application of the very concept of permanent membership. However, on balance we think that it is a desirable institution, which, among other things, acknowledges the major responsibility of some States in the difficult and expensive fields of peace-keeping, enforcement and security. Nevertheless, it is Belize's position that permanent membership must encompass more diverse and equitable ingredients, more representative of "the main forms of civilization", to use an expression found in the Statute of the International Court of Justice.

The Security Council does not engage in child's play. Every day it deals with the gravest issues of life and death. The criteria for membership must therefore be etched very clearly, very sharply. Our Government has made some suggestions about this in its paper. Many others have been made as well. Now, it is quite likely that as circumstances change such criteria will have the effect of disqualifying existing members. In recognition of the yeoman service of the current permanent members, we would propose the adoption of a "grandfather" provision, according to which the current permanent members would retain their status so long as they satisfied some very minimal conditions.

The veto is inconsistent with the modern United Nations institution of democracy. Logically, it should be abolished. Nevertheless, we lend our voice to that of those delegations that take a somewhat realistic approach to this matter. We do not subscribe to the view that we must tabulate *a priori* the instances in which the veto would be permitted. Instead, our delegation would allow a permanent member the free exercise of the veto unless all

the other permanent members determined that its exercise was inappropriate. Alternatively, the suggestion that at least two permanent members must agree to the exercise of the veto has some merit.

Finally, Belize proposes that the membership of the Council should be increased in order to afford greater equality of opportunity to the vastly increased membership of the United Nations. Yet the Council must not become unwieldy. Thus Belize would agree to a membership of between 20 and 25.

These are momentous times. From the Berlin wall to southern Africa - even in the Holy Land - there has occurred, and there is occurring, that which we dared not dream of before. Surely, in this great palace of rationality and justice, we can, no later than the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, dare to make contribution "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

Mr. CASSAR (Malta): The post-cold-war period ushered in numerous challenges which the whole membership of the United Nations has had to face with determination and courage. In that context, the report of the Secretary-General on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, submitted in accordance with resolution 47/62, has generated intense and justified interest.

For too many years issues of fundamental importance to the international community were held hostage to the logic of antagonism. The ideological and military confrontation between rival blocs was a major handicap to the development of the Security Council's potential ability to respond effectively and rapidly to special situations emanating from turbulent political, economic and social environments.

This inertia and deep feeling of malaise, however, were profoundly transformed by the dramatic political changes of the past four years. The erosion of bloc confrontation in international relations brought about a spirit of collegiality among Security Council members. Divisive approaches and the frequent use of the veto were replaced by the search for consensus in Security Council decisions, thus enhancing the chances of applying the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter, on the pacific settlement of disputes.

When my Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Guido de Marco, addressed the General Assembly on 1 October 1993, he described the Security Council as

> "a unique tool in the search for peace and security. It is a blend of the idealistic and the pragmatic; at one and the same time a deliberative and a functional organ". *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 13th meeting, pp. 13-14)*

The lifting of cold-war constraints, he added, had had a most visible and creative impact in releasing and galvanizing the peacemaking and peace-keeping role of the Council. This rediscovered dimension of the Security Council's potential in the effective utilization of the collective security provisions of the Charter, complemented by the provisions of Chapters VII and VIII, has also given a new sense of direction and a new sense of purpose, not only to the restricted membership of the Security Council, but also to the larger, significant membership of the General Assembly.

Current realities confirm that collegiality is based on shared responsibilities and obligations shared by all Member States of the Organization.

A fundamental aspect of these responsibilities is found in Article 24 of the Charter, which states that the Members of the United Nations

> "confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf".

The question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council is necessarily and intimately linked to the thrust of this provision of the Charter.

Efforts to enlarge the Council and to enhance its functions must be moulded within the framework envisaged for it under the Charter. Malta believes that an enlarged Security Council should continue to vigorously uphold this provision by intensifying its implementation through new methods of cooperation and coordination between and among the principal United Nations organs.

Malta shares with all other United Nations Members the legitimate expectation for transparency as the hallmark of the Council's work, particularly because of the impact which its decisions have on the wider membership. In this respect, we welcome the steps taken earlier this year to better inform all Missions of the monthly forecast of the work of the Council.

Recognition of a new world order in the maintenance of international peace and security has encouraged Member States to seek assistance from the Security Council, to find redress and remedy in that authoritative world body which has been assuming a wider role in advocating diplomatic resolution to tensions and conflicts in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Confidence by the international community in the United Nations and the search for common interests in forestalling the escalation of tensions and conflicts in peace-keeping and peacemaking through the Security Council has found particular resonance in the increase in the membership of the Organization. The global responsibilities of the Organization have in turn increased the activities of and the demands on the Security Council.

In 1945, when 51 States were Members of the United Nations, the Security Council consisted of 11 Members of the Organization. By 1965, when United Nations membership had increased to 113, Security Council membership was raised to 15, with the decision-making majority adjusted from seven to nine votes to reflect the change in composition.

Malta is therefore of the view that in the present circumstances, where the membership of the United Nations has risen in these last 18 years by an additional 71 new Members, an enlargement in the membership of the Security Council merits the serious consideration which it is being given. New realities of today's political environment necessitate that any revision in the composition of the Security Council must be implemented in such a way as not only to enhance the effectiveness of the Council as an instrument of collective security but also to give the Council a character that is more universal and more widely representative of States, big or small, in accordance with Article 23 of the United Nations Charter.

One of the important objectives of any enlargement of the Council's membership must be to ensure balance and equity in its composition in terms of the present level of United Nations membership. Account must be taken of regional and geographical considerations and of the need to create reasonable opportunities for all United Nations Members to take their turn in serving on the Council, in addition to considerations relating to the size and status of individual United Nations Members.

Mrs. Fréchette (Canada), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Malta has given particular attention to the arguments put forward by other Member States, especially those concerning the enlargement's impact on matters both of substance and of Security Council procedure in its new format, including the provisions of Article 27 of the United Nations Charter. This delegation endorses the establishment of an open-ended working group to consider all aspects of the question of an increase in membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council.

My Government believes that the ongoing useful deliberations being carried out in the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization as well as the consultations of the President of the General Assembly on the revitalization of the work of the Assembly should complement the debate on an encompassing review of the functions and membership of the Security Council.

In this regard, may I recall Malta's leading role during its presidency of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, when it was emphasized that under the United Nations Charter the General Assembly is the only principal organ in which all States are equal and permanent Members. The General Assembly has both the authority and the capacity to deliberate on all matters which affect international relations. It is the unique forum where issues can be considered in their interrelated aspects, where all parties to a problem can be consulted simultaneously and where the process of decision-making could be complemented by an effective process of implementation.

In any exercise on the representation on and enlargement of the membership of the Security Council, Malta feels that it would be useful and important for a balanced constitutional relationship to be maintained within and between the principal organs of the United Nations, particularly the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Office of the Secretary-General. Cooperation should also be strengthened between these organs and regional organizations, as envisaged under Chapter VIII of the Charter.

Ideas and proposals on the enhancement of the effectiveness of the Security Council and the other principal organs of the United Nations will continue to be put forward as long as our Organization exists. The approaching fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations provides an ideal opportunity for the international community to set a target for the completion of its in-depth study on the means which it has at its disposal in its endeavours to promote peace, security and prosperity.

The revitalization of the principal organs of the United Nations and the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council cannot

but be integrated in a global effort to contribute in an effective and efficient manner not only to the maintenance of international peace and security but also to the promotion of social progress and freedom for all.

Mr. BATIOUK (Ukraine): This ongoing discussion testifies once again to the timeliness and relevance of the issue of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. The great importance attached to this question by United Nations Member States is also confirmed by the many substantive replies received from Member States and contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the subject *(A/48/264)*.

The fact that the majority of the statements made have focused on the reform of the Security Council makes it clear that adapting the membership of the Council, its entire structure and composition and its methods of its work to contemporary international realities is timely if not overdue. Further delays can only block progress in developing multilateral cooperation in that constructive spirit which has gained momentum in the post-cold-war and post-blocconfrontation period.

Born nearly half a century ago, the Organization has covered significant historical ground. It has grown in membership and gained in experience. From the 51 States which founded the United Nations in 1945, United Nations membership has grown to 184 States, bringing it close to genuine universality. The United Nations has perfected its work and has extended its activities to new areas.

The ever expanding volume of work of the United Nations and the need for an adequate reflection of the numerical increase in its membership have led to the periodic enlargement of the major organs of the United Nations system. The Security Council alone, in essence, has been left out of that trend, having expanded its membership only once - namely in 1963, by four seats.

Since then the membership of the United Nations has been augmented by 71 States. This fact gives rise to the need to eliminate, at least partially, the disproportion between the composition of the Security Council and the membership of the United Nations. It is worth recalling that in 1945 the composition of the Security Council represented over 20 per cent of the total membership of the United Nations; now, in 1993, it represents only about 8 per cent.

But it is not only the numerical strength that matters, and, obviously, it is not what matters most. We have witnessed the manifold increase in the Security Council's workload and the drastic intensification of its activity, especially in recent years, when, having shaken off the bonds of the confrontation between blocs, it went over to assembly-line methods of work and tried to respond practically to each and every major challenge of international life. In this regard also, the delegation of Ukraine shares the view that the present-day composition of the Security Council and its methods of functioning need certain modifications.

At the same time, we consider the further enhancement of the efficiency of the Council's work to be equally important. The Council should retain its businesslike style of work and its capacity to react without delay to the emergence of situations calling for prompt intervention, to consider these situations in depth and at short notice and to take appropriate decisions.

We believe it is important in this matter to try to find a solution that would be acceptable to all States, including the permanent members of the Council.

In our opinion, in the solution of the problem of an increase in membership, account must be taken of the emergence of new participants in inter-State relations, participants that have both the potential and real capabilities of for playing a major role in the work of the Organization at the present time - especially in the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security - and participants that bear a substantial part of the financial burden of the United Nations.

In resolving the issue of increasing the membership of the Council, it is equally important to apply a new conceptual approach to its structure. In this regard, it would be useful to study the extent to which the two-tier model of Council membership - with some States sitting permanently and others constantly rotating - corresponds to present-day circumstances. At the initial stage of the existence of the United Nations, this system seemed to be justified. But now, as a rule, a State can obtain a seat on the Council no more often than once every 10 or 20 years.

Herein lies the root of the environment of seclusion and envy surrounding the Security Council, the principal decision-making body of the United Nations. Herein lies also the feeling that, as a State, one is either a member of the Security Council or nothing at all in this Organization, as far as substantial decision-making is concerned. That is why any future adjustments of the Security Council, in order to be successful and achieve their purpose, should provide the United Nations membership in its entirety with a sense and means of involvement in this Organization's decision-making process.

Evidently, the time for a change has come. A careful study of different possibilities to this effect may also

include the introduction of a new model of the Council - consisting, let us say, of three categories of members. In a new category of members two or three important States from each regional group would take turns in serving on the Council. This proposal could be put into practice by providing each regional group with one additional seat on the Council. Such an approach would permit States making the greatest contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the attainment of other United Nations objectives and bearing the heaviest financial burdens of the Organization to acquire greater opportunities for participation in the Council's work.

The delegation of Ukraine considers that the criteria for membership of the Security Council, laid down in Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Charter, have to be adhered to more consistently. In this regard, we share the ideas expressed in preceding statements, in particular those by the delegations of Turkey, Italy and Egypt, to cite just a few.

The next important task is to ensure effective participation in the work of the Council by States that are at once main contributors to peace-keeping operations and the largest in terms of population - for example, those with a population of over 30 million or 50 million. Such an informal group, representing more than half of mankind, if effectively incorporated into the Security Council's decision-making process, would significantly enhance the legitimacy and authority of the Council's decisions.

The question of the Council's composition cannot be resolved satisfactorily if it is isolated from the question of its voting procedure - that is, without modifying the right of veto. This phenomenon, having been incorporated into the United Nations Charter from the practice of the League of Nations, acquired a somewhat different hue once it was taken over into the United Nations. In the post-war period it was turned into leverage for counteracting attempts to impose upon one ideological system, or upon individual States belonging to that system, the will of another system or of States belonging to it. It thereby averted conflicts, the consequences of which would have been hard to foresee.

Nevertheless, one could recall in this regard that truth is often born as heresy and dies as prejudice, and that the dead hold the living with the hands of obsolete traditions. In fact, while the United Nations Charter was being worked out, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was the most eloquent, the most ardent and the most uncompromising promoter of the absolute right of veto in the Security Council. And, in the long run, it got its way. Now the Soviet Union has vanished, but the Soviet-style right of veto lives and prospers. The partnership relations currently prevailing among the permanent members of the Security Council overcome that problem. Actually, to a large extent they turn the unrestricted right of veto into a privilege casting a shadow on the principle of sovereign equality of States.

In the light of other realities of the contemporary world, it should be possible, and would be highly advisable, to take a second look at a procedure whereby a single State is, in essence, able to block a decision on any issue before the Security Council, even if it is of interest to the entire international community. At this point, it would be appropriate to study the forms of modification of the right of veto, such as the "weighted vote" or the granting to the General Assembly or to the enlarged Security Council, specially expanded for such cases, of the right to overrule the veto by qualified majority if the veto is invoked by only one permanent member of the Security Council.

The views and ideas laid down in this statement present Ukraine's vision of this issue, which is equally important for the future of the United Nations, the entire international community and individual Member States.

As is suggested in draft resolution A/48/L.28 on the agenda item under consideration, we deem it necessary to continue the in-depth study of this issue in an open-ended working group, thus ensuring, in a way, that the first practical steps in the reform of the Security Council will be taken by the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The subject now under consideration by the General Assembly is one of the most important items for the future of our Organization. Resolution 47/62, adopted by the Assembly last year, has generated a broad and diverse response, a fact which illustrates the importance of the subject and the widespread desire of Member States to contribute to the present exchange of ideas.

Venezuela's basic ideas on the "question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council" are contained in the addendum to the report of the Secretary General in document A/48/264/Add.1, dated 26 July 1993. It is not my intention to reiterate on this occasion the ideas expressed therein. However, the diversity of opinions and replies contained in the Secretary-General's report prompts us to make certain additional comments based on our recent experience as a non-permanent member of the Council for the 1992-1993 biennium.

In the exercise we are about to undertake, which will inevitably involve an examination of all aspects of the functioning of the Council and the way in which it carries out its activities, it is necessary to avoid seeing the Council as an autonomous body which acts independently and which does not take into account the interests of all Members of the United Nations. We must not lose sight of the fact that the decisions of the Security Council - as is the case in any collective forum - are the result of the sum total of the wills of its members. In its decision-making process, the Council is strictly guided by a number of parameters which are defined in the Charter of the Organization.

First, the Security Council, as decided by the Members of the Organization, shoulders the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

Secondly, the Security Council must be in a position to ensure prompt and effective action by the Organization on matters within its competence.

Thirdly, the States Members of the United Nations have agreed that when the Security Council acts in the discharge of its duties, it does so in the name and on the authority of the entire membership.

Fourthly, the restrictions on the Council's actions are those imposed by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

Fifthly, the decisions of the Council are binding on all Members because all have made a commitment to accept them.

Another basic consideration which we think should guide our discussion of the question of the increase in the membership of the Council is the need to ensure that any decision adopted should not ultimately result in decreasing or hampering the effectiveness of that body. Our main objective must, on the contrary, be to enhance the functioning and efficacy of the Security Council so that the Organization can be in a position, as required by the Charter, to act promptly and efficiently in situations which affect international peace and security.

Turning now to some of the substantive aspects which will inevitably become subjects of discussion within the context of the item we are deliberating, I would like to refer specifically to the question of the increase in the membership of the Security Council and the possible establishment of a new category of members, to which many of the opinions contained in the Secretary-General's report referred.

Since the very beginning of the Organization, Venezuela has maintained that the concept of "permanent member" of the Security Council and the right to veto associated with it are contrary to the democratic bases of this Organization. In this context, the increase in the number of members must be reconciled with the equal rights and obligations of all Member States. Venezuela believes that any reform must serve, not to exacerbate, but to eliminate the imbalances inherent in the current composition of the Council. It must work to make the Security Council more generally representative *vis-à-vis* the rest of the Organization and its Member States, and to ensure greater equity in the regional distribution of seats.

Enlargement of the Council in keeping with these criteria will require universally accepted definitions of the factors on which the choice of the members of this important organ will be based. No parameter, whether economic, political, demographic or other, seems able adequately to respond to the complex questions raised by these proposals. Any decision on this subject would need, in our opinion, to be defined in advance. Furthermore, we must consider the implications, not only for the functioning and representation of the Security Council, but also within each particular region and for the desirable balance among regions. Venezuela is guided in this respect by the need to preserve a balance between the desires and obligations of each and every one of the Member States.

Venezuela is prepared to examine objectively the advantages and disadvantages of the various proposals made and to participate constructively in a discussion of them, without deciding in advance which form or formula will best balance our national and regional interests and those of the Organization as a whole.

The process of reform we are evaluating must have as its goal the building of a more efficient Organization, one which recognizes the complexities of the present world and accepts the diversity of its interests. Venezuela believes that no aspect of the functioning and composition of the Council should be excluded *a priori* from such an exercise. We support the establishment of an open-ended working group to consider and reach agreed solutions concerning the increase in the membership of the Council and all related issues, in particular machinery for decision-making, participation and responsibility *vis-à-vis* all the Members of the Organization.

Venezuela has had the privilege of witnessing and participating in substantial changes within the Security Council. We must provide stability and continuity to this process of change, basing it on the greatest possible transparency and representativity. We know that we will have to reconcile interests and approaches, but we are

certain that the Organization can only be strengthened as a result of this exercise. We trust that we will approach our task with farsightedness, a sense of responsibility and the desire to provide ourselves with a Security Council that is able to meet the demands of today's world.

Mr. ACHARYA (Nepal): Nepal was one of the countries which responded to the request by the Secretary-General to Member States to transmit to him views on possible review of the membership of the Security Council pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/62 of 11 December 1992. I wish to enumerate some of the basic considerations that have guided the views of His Majesty's Government of Nepal on this important question.

Article 24 of the Charter confers responsibility on the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, with the clear understanding that in carrying out its tasks the Council acts on behalf of the entire membership. This important provision introduces the fundamental democratic principle of representativeness. The dramatic increase in the membership of the United Nations - from 113 in 1965, when the current composition of the Security Council took effect, to 184 at present - makes it clear that the membership of the Council today does not adequately reflect the current configuration of the United Nations membership.

My delegation is therefore pleased to note that there is a broad convergence of views that adjustments to the Council's composition will consolidate wider support for its decisions. There also seems to be general agreement that a limited increase in membership would meet the democratic criterion of representativeness without impairing the capacity of the Council to act promptly and effectively. Likewise, my delegation shares the view that an increase in membership has to be guided by the important principle of equitable representation.

The comments of Member States in the report of the Secretary-General and the statements in this debate have also highlighted the need for a critical review of the working methods and functions of the Security Council. As the Prime Minister of Nepal said in his address to the General Assembly, the Security Council, entrusted as it is with the maintenance of international peace and security, must act in an impartial and even-handed manner and must be perceived as doing so. Nepal also believes that the real strength of collective security lies in the capacity to implement the provisions of the Charter relating to the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is therefore necessary to look into ways and means of promoting preventive diplomacy by the Security Council.

We note that the Security Council has already initiated steps to enhance transparency in its work, in response to the repeated calls from the general membership. This process needs to be further consolidated. In this context, I wish to underline the necessity of forging a consultative mechanism between the Council and troop-contributing countries on matters relating to peace-keeping operations. A stronger interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council is necessary to ensure that the decisions of the Council in fact represent the collective will of the membership.

My delegation welcomes the President's intention to set up an inter-sessional open-ended working group to examine and formulate recommendations on all aspects relating to increase in membership and to the practices and procedures of the Security Council. The task is indeed enormous, but, given the political will, we should be able to take a decision by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

Mr. CATARINO (Portugal): Since the end of the cold war international relations have changed dramatically, and, although the world may have become a somewhat more uncertain place, the way may now be open for the United Nations to fulfil the principles enshrined in the Charter signed almost 50 years ago in San Francisco.

According to the Charter, the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security falls to the Security Council. The changes that have occurred in the international situation in the past few years have enabled the Security Council, for the first time, fully to play the role conferred upon it. But while it is today more capable of responding to the international situation, the Council is increasingly besieged by an ever-growing number of demands for its involvement.

Against that background, it is therefore completely understandable that the United Nations and its Member States have undertaken to review the issue of the composition and equitable representation of the membership of the Security Council. In this regard, Portugal very much looks forward to participating in the discussions and hopes to contribute towards a successful outcome which is supported by all Member States.

The fact is that the composition of the Security Council does not, on the one hand, reflect the current global state of affairs nor, on the other hand, does it take into account the vast increase in the membership of the United Nations. The Security Council must be made more efficient and legitimized by mirroring, in an equitable manner, these new realities.

When seeking a solution to this question, we must strive to carry out our discussions in the most open and transparent manner possible in order to avoid potential tensions and to promote an outcome which reflects a consensus.

The search for equitable representation on the Council must never be at the expense of its efficiency. It is extremely important that the Council be able expeditiously to take decisions that will be supported by the weight of its membership.

At this point we should like to put forward a number of elements as contributing to the discussions on the reform of the Security Council.

Portugal does not believe that it would be appropriate to create a third category of Council member. The Security Council must have only permanent and non-permanent members.

One way of maintaining the efficiency of the Council while increasing its representativeness might be to increase the number of non-permanent members by one for each regional group. This solution seems to us to be reasonable and pragmatic.

Furthermore, we believe that any increase in the number of permanent seats on the Council must not be achieved at the expense of the number of non-permanent members. The principle of non-permanent membership of the Security Council goes to the heart of the matter of equitable representation.

We actively encourage arrangements for, and the establishment of appropriate mechanisms of, rotation within regional groupings that will enable a greater and fairer representation of the membership at large on the Council.

Portugal is of the opinion that the reform of the Security Council offers an opportunity for a review of the methods of its work, especially with regard to the role of the Secretary-General and the participation of other organs of the United Nations and non-Member States that are directly concerned with whichever matter is under discussion.

Finally, and above all, we believe that any increase in the number of permanent seats on the Council should reflect the will of the United Nations membership as a whole. Moreover, it is crucial that permanent members of the Council have the political will and the capacity, and be in a position, to assume the global responsibilities entailed by that status with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security without being subject to internal or external constraints.

While we recognize the complexities involved, Portugal wholeheartedly welcomes the current debate on this question, and we sincerely hope that our reflections will contribute to the search for a solution which is embraced by us all.

Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria): I should like at the outset to join previous speakers in congratulating the Secretary-General on compiling the valuable report entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council", which is now before the Assembly.

As one of the original sponsors of the 1978 resolution on this item, my delegation is immensely satisfied to be participating in the current debate. We are especially delighted that the subject, after being a matter of routine on the Assembly's agenda in the 1970s and 1980s, has now acquired well-deserved importance and topicality in the eyes of Member States and of the international community at large. We welcome this development.

We hope that the consideration of, and debate on, this item at the current session will not only throw further light on the subject, but will also result in the taking of clear, practical steps that will clearly move forward the process of reforming and expanding the Council, in a manner which, in particular, provides for truly equitable representation and enhances the legitimacy of its decisions.

While it is not necessary to rehash here the arguments that my delegation has elaborated here and in several other forums concerning the urgent need to reform and revitalize the Security Council, it would be useful to reiterate, if only for the sake of emphasis, several of my delegation's views on the question of reform of the Council.

Reform is important if the Council is to retain its credibility and legitimacy as the United Nations organ primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. It would also accord with the democratization process that the international community yearns to see manifested in the United Nations - a process that would ensure broad participation by all the Organization's Members, or their representatives, in the affairs of the Security Council.

More important, expansion of the Council would ensure that no Member States harboured resentment on the grounds of their perceived exclusion from the affairs of the Council. After all, as Article 24 of the Charter says, "the Security Council acts on their behalf", and it does so only

when it is discharging its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Nigerian delegation has carefully read Member States' submissions on this subject. We are delighted that it has generated so many and varied perceptions and orientations, with such variations of emphasis. However, running through the various arguments is recognition of the urgent need for expansion and reform of the Council. We are impressed by the enthusiasm with which States have addressed the issue in response to the request of the Secretary-General.

At this point, although the international situation remains fluid in terms of geopolitical and economic changes, which might make it difficult clearly to delineate the course and direction of expected changes, it makes a good deal of sense to anticipate the possible extent and scope of changes that are feasible and should be made as expeditiously as possible. We should therefore seize the moment and take advantage of the groundswell of international support for change in order to reform the Council. For example, it is evidently important to increase the permanent and the non-permanent membership of the Council to reflect both the geographical and the demographic configuration of our world, as well as its economic and political realities.

Basically, the principles of reform of and change in the Security Council must reflect global demands and expectations, and not the exclusive interests of a few Member States. In other words, the reform process must be holistic in concept and execution, not selective and discriminatory - satisfying the conditions of some, while ignoring those of others. Any reform of the Council that merely fulfilled the aspirations of some but left those of others in abeyance would risk the creation of additional difficulties of credibility and of transparency for our Organization.

In our delegation's view, the issue of equitable representation is not concerned only with expansion of the Council in terms of permanent and non-permanent seats; it is also linked with the whole question of other possible measures to strengthen and revitalize that organ, especially in the face of changing global realities. In this connection, the apparent, critical lack of transparency is what many Member States perceive as marking the conduct of Security Council business at present. It is therefore anticipated that possible reform should include measures, for example, to enable Member States that so desire to make their contributions when decisions on vital issues are being taken in the Council.

Transparency in the work of the Council could be furthered by more open announcement of meetings. Member States involved in disputes or conflicts of which the Council is seized must be able to participate not just in the Council's formal meetings but also in its informal consultations, in a manner consistent with the spirit of the Charter. Such openness and transparency would ensure that the decisions ultimately arrived at by the Council enjoyed the willingness of all Member States to see them implemented appropriately. Transparency and increased involvement of States would ensure that in the final analysis Member States had the opportunity to participate in discussion of, and to be fully consulted on, matters affecting them.

My delegation would be reluctant to subscribe to the notion that problems or issues connected with Security Council reform - for example, expansion and working methods - must be tackled all at once. We believe that a holistic approach in this sense might be unwieldy, because of the multiplicity of processes and difficulties that it might entail. To that extent, therefore, we urge that an incremental reform process be pursued in a manner allowing, for example, first, for the issue of expansion to be discussed and disposed of, and, secondly, for the question of working methods and procedures to be discussed.

We must not be overwhelmed by the enormity of the problems that Security Council reform will undoubtedly entail, because, as the Chinese say, a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. We must have the courage to take the important first step towards reform of the Council this session.

Beyond acceptance of the basis of reform, we must be brave enough to set a definite time-frame within which the reform process must be completed. This is important if the process, once begun, is not to drag on interminably. Therefore, my delegation will, for a start, support draft resolution A/48/L.28, which proposes the establishment of an open-ended working group further to consider the issue of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. We shall be prepared to participate actively in the important work that the group is to be mandated to accomplish.

On the question of a possible time-frame for Security Council expansion and reform, it appears that 1995, the year in which the United Nations will commemorate its fiftieth anniversary, has special significance. It does not take too long to determine that an idea is good and worth implementing if there is the necessary political will or disposition.

At fifty the Organization would be a mature enough institution to take whatever decisions its Members feel are appropriate and necessary. At fifty, the United Nations cannot afford to be an institution which, though conscious of the measures it needs to take to revitalize and strengthen itself, falls short of the wisdom and political commitment to do so. We must deliver on the expectation of the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the Organization and the international community as a whole on these matters. Let it not be said that we failed to try. Now is the time to begin, and to begin with the determination to succeed in this worthwhile endeavour.

Mr. NYAKYI (United Republic of Tanzania): The debate on the reform of the Security Council has been going on for a long time, since the Council was last reformed. But prospects for its reform have never been better than they are today. There is a consensus that the end of the cold war has created an atmosphere that makes further reform possible. This is obvious from the replies of Member States reproduced in the Secretary-General's report (A/46/264). I thank the Secretary-General for preparing the report.

In one area of the reform agenda, that relating to the size of the Security Council, a broad consensus already exists. At the time of the founding of the United Nations in 1946, with a membership of 51, the six non-permanent members of the Security Council represented nearly 12 per cent of the total membership of the United Nations. Twenty years later, when the total membership of the United Nations had more than doubled to 113, the representation of the 10 non-permanent members had fallen to less than 9 per cent. Today, 30 years later, the number remains the same but, as a percentage of the vastly increased membership of the United Nations, it has further dropped to less than 6 per cent. The need to increase the size of the Security Council to reflect the growth in the membership of the United Nations is thus self-evident.

Western Europe as a region has always been overrepresented on the Council. Four of the five permanent members are European countries and at any one time there are three non-permanent members, making a total of seven representing that continent. By contrast, the vast continent of Asia has one permanent member plus three non-permanent members, while Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean have three and two non-permanent members respectively and no permanent seats. These figures clearly demonstrate that the principle of equitable geographical representation enunciated in Article 23 of the Charter has not been satisfactorily applied in relation to the African, the Asian, and the Latin American and Caribbean regions. Of these, Africa is the most underrepresented. We very much hope that the review upon which we are now embarking will rectify these imbalances.

Increasing the size of the Council is the most obvious way of ensuring that more of the Members of the United Nations are more equitably represented in the Security Council. It will not, however, address a major criticism relating to the Council's methods of work. The Charter confers on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In discharging this responsibility, the Charter makes clear that the Council is acting on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations. That is why the Council's decisions are binding on all Member States. The presumption is that members of the Council are attuned and sensitive to the views of the rest of the membership of the United Nations and take those views into account when acting on their behalf. Yet the commonest criticism of the Council these days, and particularly in the last two years, is that it seldom listens to the views of Member States outside the Council or takes them into account in its deliberations. Most of the Council's work is, increasingly, being conducted in informal sessions, with formal meetings becoming correspondingly fewer and little more than occasions to rubber-stamp decisions reached at informal meetings. Thus, even the limited opportunity which the wider United Nations membership has of participating in the Council's work is being increasingly eroded. And that is not all. Important decisions are increasingly being taken by a few permanent members in prior consultations before regular informal consultations involving the full Council. The result is that by its methods of work the Council is moving further and further away from the intent of Article 24.

This is what the call for more transparency in the way the Council conducts its work is all about. It is intended to give the wider United Nations membership a sense of participation in the work of the Council. It calls for the establishment of mechanisms or arrangements, not only for ascertaining the views of the general membership of the United Nations, but also for enabling their participation in the work of the Council.

In responding to this criticism, the Council has recently taken some modest steps towards improving the situation. The publication of the agenda of the Security Council in the *Journal of the United Nations* goes some way towards keeping the general membership informed about matters under consideration in the Council. The initiative taken by the United States presidency in August of opening up a dialogue with regional groups on how to bring about more transparency in the Council's work is a very commendable one and should be encouraged and pursued.

We also applaud the initiative undertaken by Ambassador Ronaldo Sardenberg of Brazil, the President of the Security Council for the month of October, of personally presenting this year's report of the Council to the General Assembly. This helped to underline the importance of the report and to highlight the complementary role of the General Assembly in the maintenance of international peace and security. We urge future Presidents of the Council to emulate this example. But more than that, we join in the call for future reports to be analytical rather than in the present format of merely listing the Council's activities. An analytical report will encourage constructive debates in the General Assembly and eventually contribute towards the enhancement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council. A better-informed General Assembly will be found to be a valuable ally of the Security Council in the common endeavour to maintain international peace and security.

At a time when people everywhere are yearning for more democracy, the Security Council should devise innovative ways and means of responding to the world-wide call for more transparency in its work and for greater involvement of the wider membership of the United Nations in its work. The temptation to work as an exclusive club should be avoided.

My delegation has always been opposed to the veto, a relic of the Second World War which negates the principle of the sovereign equality of States. We have therefore consistently called for its abolition. It is clear, however, that a consensus for its abolition has not yet emerged. We therefore favour giving serious thought to the various proposals intended to restrict its use to a number of agreed matters. We welcome the fact that it is seldom used nowadays and that, increasingly, the intention is to work to achieve consensus in the Council. Still, the existence of the veto will continue to affect the outcome of debates. Its abolition therefore remains a legitimate objective for the majority of the Members of the United Nations.

Critics of reform, and those who do not wish to go beyond enlarging the size of the Council, warn that reform could impair the efficiency and effectiveness of the Security Council. We disagree that the kind of reforms that have been advocated in the debate today threaten the Council in this way. Making the Council more representative of the international community and more responsive to the needs and concerns of the majority of the people of the world will strengthen rather than weaken the Council. The contrary is certain to threaten not just the Council's effectiveness and efficiency, but also its moral authority. The Council will lose its legitimacy and the support of the international community if it is perceived to cater to the interests of a few Members while ignoring those of the majority of the Members of the United Nations. It is not a question of choice between efficiency and effectiveness on the one hand, and representativeness on the other. Both are essential for the Security Council to continue to enjoy the credibility, legitimacy and moral authority it needs to discharge its mandate successfully.

It should be clear from the foregoing that the Tanzanian delegation is in favour of a broad mandate for the open-ended working group that will consider the Secretary General's report (A/48/264) on the agenda item, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council". Reform that does not go beyond the arithmetic will not be an adequate answer to the worldwide call for a Council that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of peoples throughout the world in the post-cold-war era.

My delegation supports the proposal that the working group should be chaired by two co-chairmen. It is a practice that we would like to see used more frequently in the conduct of United Nations meetings of this nature because of its evident advantages over the regular practice. We saw how well it served us in regard to the work on the revitalization and restructuring of the General Assembly. Whether one is in favour of a broad or narrow mandate, it is quite obvious from the Secretary-General's report that the working group will have to handle a broad range of issues which will require several meetings. It is therefore prudent to have two co-chairmen to share the workload. The outcome can only be a carefully balanced product.

As ideas have crystallized, the informal consultations on the subject of the reform of the Security Council have already generated a certain momentum. Although the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations would seem to be a desirable target date for the conclusion of the reform exercise, the present momentum should be used to achieve as much common ground as possible. We therefore welcome the call for the report to be submitted to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Finally, it goes without saying that on such a vitally important subject, we should work towards achieving consensus without giving anyone the right to hold up progress towards agreement.

In the efforts to set up the open-ended working group, to establish its mandate and to get it to start its work, you can count on the full support and cooperation of the Tanzanian delegation.

Mr. KHAN (Pakistan): It is universally accepted that the United Nations must change and adapt if it is to remain

relevant and effective in fulfilling the purposes and principles set out in its Charter. Over the past 45 years, the United Nations has indeed changed and adapted, and assumed important new roles that were hardly imagined at the time of the Organization's establishment. This change has taken place mostly in the economic and social spheres, and much of it has been accomplished without recourse to amendments to the Charter.

The Security Council, which is the principal organ for the maintenance of international peace and security, has changed and adapted the least among the principal organs of the United Nations. The only change has been the expansion of its membership from 11 to 15 in 1963 by the addition of four non-permanent member States.

The present item was originally inscribed on the Assembly's agenda mainly to consider another increase in the non-permanent membership of the Council, to reflect the increment in the Organization's membership. Since then, however, not only has the United Nations membership increased considerably, but the entire structure of international relations has changed. The bipolar world has been replaced by a world that is in political, economic and social transition and transformation.

It is in the context of the emerging international scenario that we must seek to examine how the Security Council can most effectively serve to preserve and promote international peace and security. This exercise certainly cannot be restricted to an increase in the Council's membership alone.

Pakistan believes that the main function of this process is to further strengthen and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Security Council. It must be related to the Council's ability to discharge its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Consequently, the guiding consideration should and must be how effectively the Security Council can function in the light of the newly emerging trends.

This view is shared by the majority of the United Nations membership, as is evident from paragraphs 30 and 32 of the Declaration of the Non-Aligned summit held in Jakarta last year.

The views of the Government of Pakistan on the reform of the Security Council are contained in document A/48/264. We share the general desire of Member States to strengthen the role of the Security Council as well as to review its composition to reflect adequately the increase in the membership of the United Nations - in particular, the larger number of small and medium-sized States that have joined the United Nations.

It is from the conclusions reached on the effective functioning of the Security Council that recommendations on the other aspects should flow, such as the composition and size of the Security Council and its relationship to the general membership. Any meaningful review must also encompass the broader issues of transparency and the involvement of the non-members of the Security Council in the decision-making process. Related matters such as the efficacy of the Council's decisions, uniformity and consistency in their implementation, the method of decision-making and the role of the Secretary-General in relation to the Security Council, would also need to be addressed.

The reform exercise should promote greater democratization in accordance with the principle of the sovereign equality of all States. It should not serve to widen the existing inequalities in the rights and privileges of Member States. The recommendations evolved must be compatible with the overall measures to restructure and strengthen the United Nations.

It is of fundamental importance that the outcome of our efforts must be in strict conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It must be based on consensus and agreement among Member States. A decision on this question that lacks the support of the general membership would be unfruitful. Indeed, it may erode general support for future decisions and actions of the Security Council. We are therefore gratified to note the emphasis placed by most speakers on the importance of reaching consensus on this crucial issue.

The delegation of Pakistan endorses the establishment of an open-ended working group to consider the various issues involved in this item of the agenda. The work of the group should be serious and substantive; it should not be rushed by artificial deadlines or anniversaries.

The role, functions and powers assigned to the Security Council in the Charter were conceived in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. They were based on the presumption that the five permanent members of the Security Council - which were allied during the War - would continue to act in concert and harmony. This, as we all know, was a mistaken assumption. The Security Council remained virtually moribund throughout the period of the cold war; conflicts and disputes were mostly settled outside the ambit of the Council. The world despaired of ever realizing the goal of collective security. Hope was revived after the end of the cold war, especially after the conflict in the Gulf. The enthusiasm and optimism have since abated somewhat, tempered by the inadequate performance of the Council, especially its failure to

implement its own resolutions and save the victims of aggression in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Therefore, if the Council is truly to become a powerful instrument for international peace and security, it is essential that we closely analyse the reasons for its recent failures and inadequacies and that we evolve agreement on the most effective structures, modalities and procedures to redress those shortcomings. This should be the primary focus of the deliberations of the proposed working group.

Mr. BOTEZ (Romania): It has been said many times that the United Nations should be reformed, and the item that we are discussing now is only a part of this much-needed process aimed at better adapting our half-century-old world Organization to the problems that will face the world during the next century.

An agenda item of particular interest in this context is the one entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council". The Romanian Government has submitted its preliminary observations in response to resolution 47/62, expressing my country's support for the idea of improving the representative character of the Security Council, including by means of a limited increase in its membership.

The structure of the Security Council, which we are now discussing ways to improve, is an expression of the post-Second-World-War era. I believe that it is our duty to pay, here and now, a tribute of gratitude to the founding fathers of our Charter for their inspired, future-oriented realism: the Security Council, in its present form, helped us all avoid a major conflict during the difficult decades of the cold war and has enabled us to control the cold peace quite successfully. This a major achievement, and it is not easy to discuss change after such successes.

But we are living now in a different world, and it seems to me that, strangely enough, our present images of international security and world stability are still dependent on the past. To update them is not enough, for - as has been said many times - the present is not only the result of the past: in our rapidly changing world, it can be seen also as the genetic matrix of the future.

Thus, we believe that updating the structure of the Security Council is not enough: we need to rethink this issue within a future-oriented perspective. Therefore, the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council is more a project to be studied than a decision to be made immediately.

That is the spirit in which we are approaching the various proposals for restructuring the Security Council. If we are to be at the level of our predecessors of 1945 - who designed a world organization able to respond properly to world challenges for almost 50 years - we should examine the alternative plausible scenarios for world evolution in the decades to come, select the possible old and new challenges that may arise, and only then finally design organizational structures capable of responding to them.

This suggests a new concept that may possibly be useful in our analyses and decisions: that of developing an anticipatory design for our world Organization, and in particular for the Security Council. This will not be an easy task; we must construct, now, an organization flexible enough to respond to the still-unknown challenges of the coming decades. Thus, we must first try to determine which are the stable axes of world evolution - axes that are common to alternative scenarios - and then anticipate the potential crises associated with this unknown future. The organizational structure of the Security Council is therefore only a tool whose degree of adaptation can be assessed only in terms of how capable it is of dealing with these challenges.

This is the perspective in which we view the reform of the Security Council. Let me note in passing that - taking into account the alternative, future-oriented scenarios - we have decided to support Germany and Japan as legitimate candidates for permanent membership.

As can be seen, for us an anticipatory design for the Security Council is intimately related - I should like to say, complementary - to the preventive diplomacy so eloquently advocated by Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, our Secretary-General. In fact, preventive diplomacy is helping us to avoid crises in the future world. An anticipatory design for the Security Council would ensure that we had an organizational framework capable of transforming preventive diplomacy into effective political action. We would thus able to free our present both from the ghosts of the past and from false fears for the future, and "we, the people" would feel free to live our lives to the full and enjoy our present without remaining slaves of the dead or of the not-yet-born. To my mind, that is pragmatic realism.

The informal consultations that have been held over the past few weeks have enabled the President to submit draft resolution A/48/L.18. It is our understanding that a general agreement is emerging concerning the establishment of an open-ended working group to consider all aspects of the representative character of the Security Council, and other related matters. This procedure will

allow us to continue our debates and consultations, on the basis of specific approaches and proposals. My delegation supports the draft resolution, and hopes that it will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. ABDELLAH (Tunisia) *(interpretation from French)*: During the general debate held just a few weeks ago in this Hall, all the speakers who came to this rostrum set forth their view of the role to be played in the world today by the United Nations and its organs, particularly the Security Council, with the end in mind of making them more capable of responding effectively to the renewed hope of promoting a better world and one better adapted to current international requirements.

There can be no doubt that since 1945 the Charter of the United Nations has played a fundamental role in international relations, which have enjoyed some happy moments as many countries achieved their independence but which have also known long periods of tension and crises that have threatened world security. During those periods, only the constant and painstaking search for renewed balance enabled us, in the final analysis, to save our planet from the worst consequences of bipolarization.

In the world of today, free of the frictions resulting from the cold war, it is imperative that the Charter - which, I would remind members, in terms of its most important provisions has been static and immutable since it was drafted - take into account the spectacular developments on the world scene. It is this new reality, which is becoming more apparent every day, that has given rise to dialogue and consultation between all Member States on reforming the structures of our Organization, its organs, its agenda and its methods of working.

In this regard, the principle that should guide such dialogue and consultation is that the management of world affairs is a shared responsibility.

The generally acknowledged need to adapt our Charter to the realities of the world today, on the threshold of the twenty-first century, requires a review of some of the Charter's provisions - those concerning the composition and working methods of the Security Council, the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Indeed, if it was necessary in 1963 to increase the membership of the Security Council from 11 to 15, it is just as vital today once again to revise the membership of this body, to give it a logical ratio to the number of Members of our Organization and to establish a more equitable and balanced representation of the Members of the United Nations, on behalf of which the Council acts, pursuant to paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter.

The Tunisian delegation wishes to stress in this context that our concern is not so much to correct a certain disparity in the current mathematical proportion but, rather, to ensure an equitably established representation, which is now lacking and which ultimately damages the sovereign equality of States, all of which are concerned about the maintenance of international peace and security.

A review of the composition of the Security Council and of an increase in its membership is also dictated by the new concepts and requirements of international security. Indeed, this can no longer be seen exclusively in military terms or in terms of deterrence, as was the case when the San Francisco Charter was drafted. The philosophy of the new world order to which we have subscribed and the outlines of which we are beginning to see has brought to the fore new challenges and priorities.

The "Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277), recommended by the Security Council summit meeting in 1992, quite rightly points out the widely felt need to rethink the concept of international peace and security in non-selective but multidimensional terms that take due account of the various aspects of international life and the non-military threats to peace flowing therefrom.

Indeed, the responsibility of the Security Council to deal with new aspects of international life in their human, environmental and economic dimensions not only requires appropriate representation within the Security Council of our world's geographical zones, and thus also of their particular features, but also calls for a new approach in dealing with matters brought to the attention of the Council, which must base its decisions on the principle of consultation between its permanent and non-permanent States. A balanced increase in the number of the latter can only confer credibility and legitimacy upon this fundamental body's action with respect to the system of undiminished collective security to which we aspire.

With regard to an increase in the number of members of the Council, the Tunisian delegation believes that the exercise should not be based upon purely arithmetical considerations but must reflect more faithfully the new shape of the international community in order to associate it more equitably with the taking of decisions and their implementation in the area of international peace and security.

My delegation is aware of the developments that have occurred hitherto on this question, which has been before the General Assembly since its thirty-fourth session.

While we wholeheartedly believe that the question of an increase in the Council's membership must be in keeping with the spirit and letter of Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Charter, we cannot help but note the proliferation of other subjective criteria which not only complicate the exercise and divert it from its natural course but also tend to turn it into a simple competition to join the Council. These are two conditions that could prevent us indefinitely from reaching our hoped-for goal or could even lead to the failure of the whole exercise, which, I would remind members, is dependent on the particularly restrictive and constraining provisions of Article 108 of the Charter.

In this regard, my delegation remains committed to the principle of consensus, which should guide our action if we are to attain the objective of making this important body an effective, representative, democratic and ultimately credible body.

Moving now towards the principle of preventive diplomacy and the consolidation and maintenance of peace, the international community is more than ever bound to base its action on the principles of the Charter, which in turn are based upon the indivisible twin foundations of the collective responsibility and legal equality of States.

We are of course in favour of a new structure with an increased number of permanent and non-permanent members, designed in such a way as to take account of the emergence of new economic Powers recognized as such and committed to the cause of international peace and cooperation. We must, however, refrain from defining this concept of power hastily and for transitory reasons; and we must eliminate from it any hegemonistic connotations - themselves challenged in the world today - particularly because the current exercise aims at adapting this concept to the new requirements of changing international relations.

Beyond the objective criteria that could be generally accepted for qualifying for permanent or non-permanent membership for a renewable period, or for non-permanent membership within the framework of the current principle of rotation - criteria which should in no way depart from the provisions of Article 23 of the Charter - account must be taken of the performance of Member States internally in the economic, social and human spheres and also of their adaptation to democratic requirements in social relations and the establishment and consolidation of the concept of a State based on the rule of law.

With regard to reforming the working methods of the Security Council, we wholeheartedly endorse the remarks and comments made by previous speakers. We also note with satisfaction the newly established practice of publishing the agenda of informal meetings of the Security Council, which sheds some light, admittedly limited, on the activities for so long carried on in secret in that famous room adjacent to the Council Chamber.

We hope that the Security Council will hold more formal meetings open to all non-members, so that transparency becomes the rule in this body bearing primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, thus permitting Member States legitimately to express their views and concerns.

We also welcome the willingness of the permanent members of the Council to inform interested States and listen to their suggestions. My delegation believes that it would be useful to formalize these consultations in frequent meetings whenever an important question before the Council affects more than one Member State or has broader repercussions on the international scene.

Recourse to Article 29 of the Charter by the creation of one or more subsidiary organs of the Security Council would make it possible for the Council to entrust to such bodies the preliminary consideration of questions of vital importance to international peace and security so that any decision taken by the Council on those questions is the fruit of mature reflection and carefully prepared.

Here we are thinking particularly, though not exclusively, of the increasingly numerous peace-keeping operations. Consultations between members of the Council and the countries contributing troops, *matériel* and finance would contribute to decisions on the timing and the resources needed in order to guarantee United Nations operations every chance of success. The contribution of troop-contributing countries is particularly relevant in the light of paragraph 2 of Article 47 of the Charter, which permits the Military Staff Committee of the Security Council to invite any Member of the United Nations which is not permanently represented on the Committee to be associated with it so that it may discharge its responsibilities efficiently.

Any consideration of changing the composition of the Security Council and improving its working methods must also take due account of the dialogue which must constantly go on between it and the General Assembly on strengthening the mandate of the Assembly, which, after all, will still be the democratic forum *par excellence* and the proper place for the expression and attainment of the noble objectives of our Charter.

My delegation is sincerely motivated by a constructive spirit, based upon the need we all feel to have an Organization whose actions are effective and which enjoys full legitimacy in the community of nations. The

democratization of international relations, which we sorely need in order to cope with the increased responsibilities resulting from today's many and varied needs, will be realized only if bodies such as the Security Council become truly representative, so that all the legitimate hopes of nations, large and small, can be expressed there.

My delegation will therefore spare no effort in making its contribution to the group to be created by the draft resolution, in order to reach a concerted consensus decision on the future of an organ whose credibility and effectiveness we would all like to see strengthened.

Mr. YAÑEZ BARNUEVO (Spain) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Clearly, in recent years there have been changes of great importance in international life which required profound changes in the basic premises of international society as shaped in 1945, due to the appearance of many new States and new political, economic and social realities.

That situation has generated growing appeals on the need to adapt the Charter and the organs of the United Nations to the new social and political reality of the world today and the new demands of the international community.

Spain believes that this change is legally viable and politically advisable. Obviously, it must not endanger the work of the Organization; on the contrary, it should allow increased efficiency at a time when, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of my country stated in the general debate earlier this session:

> "The United Nations has a great opportunity to play an effective, central role in harmonizing world-wide the efforts of the international community in order to achieve the common purposes embodied in the Charter." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 11th meeting, p.16)*

Therefore, we think our efforts should be based on three premises: first, careful selection of the themes where change is desirable and feasible; secondly, a gradual and flexible approach which combines the reform of the Charter with the full use of the Charter's potential through constructive interpretation and development of its organs; and, finally, a constant quest for mutual understanding between all Member States.

It is understandable that one of the organs which requires reform is the Security Council, because this is where there have been the quantitative and qualitative changes to which I have already referred. The ratio of the number of members of the Council to the total number of Members of the Organization has gone from 1:5 in 1945 to 1:12 today. Furthermore, the new realities of international society have allowed the Council to carry out continuous activities, taking decisions which increasingly and intensively affect all Members of the Organization.

Evidence of the renewed interest among Members of the United Nations in reforming the Council can be seen in the large number of Member States that responded to the invitation of the Secretary-General, under resolution 47/62, to submit comments on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

Spain is among the Member States that replied to that request, and I wish to say here for the record that in its opinion there are three criteria that should be taken into consideration when examining this question and, indeed, any reform of the Security Council. They are: representativeness, effectiveness and transparency.

First, the Council's representative nature. It is important that the membership of the Security Council, which, according to Article 24 of the Charter, acts on behalf of all Members of the Organization, should properly reflect the increased number and diversity of the Member States.

Secondly, effectiveness. We should not only ensure the prompt adoption of timely decisions but also ensure that such decisions are implemented and complied with fully, promptly and equitably.

Lastly, transparency. The Council's working methods should be revised to allow for better information concerning its working methods and debates, and greater attention should be given to the opinions of Member States that are directly concerned with the issue under consideration.

We believe that these three criteria can be reduced to one single consideration, namely, guaranteeing the legitimacy of the Council so as to enhance its prestige and authority and to promote respect for its decisions.

Spain believes that in some cases the achievement of the aforementioned goals would require amendment of the Charter whereas other goals can be achieved through a constructive interpretation making use of all the possibilities already inherent in the Charter.

Charter reform must ensure that the Security Council has greater representativeness. It would thus be fitting to proceed with a moderate increase in the number of Council

seats and to consider, *inter alia*, the creation of a new category of members that would permit more frequent participation in the Council, through periodic elections in the General Assembly of certain States that are particularly well able to contribute to the purposes of the Organization, in accordance with objective criteria based on the principles established in Article 23 of the Charter. Spain considers that such principles are still fully valid and that particular emphasis should be placed, first of all, on the contribution of Member States to the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as on equitable geographical distribution.

On the other hand, reform of the Council's working methods affords fertile ground for an examination of means to make full use of the opportunities provided by the Charter through practical implementation and constructive interpretation. Some progress has already been made in this respect by the Council itself, with the help of suggestions from all Members of the Organization in various forums. The debate in the Assembly a few weeks ago on the occasion of the submission of the Council's annual report is a good point of departure for that effort, as were the interesting ideas and suggestions submitted by various Member States.

As I said at the beginning of my statement, any reform of the Council must be made gradually and with flexibility, with the participation of all States Members of the Organization and seeking consensus with regard to the end results. My delegation is therefore in favour of the adoption, by consensus, of the draft resolution (A/48/L.28) submitted by the President, by which the General Assembly would decide to establish an open-ended working group of the Assembly to consider all aspects of the question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to it.

In our opinion, this would represent a starting-point for a constructive dialogue, one that my country hopes will lead to a general agreement on a renewed Security Council with a composition and working methods that would meet the expectations of the Members of the Organization and enable it to perform with authority and effectiveness the tasks entrusted to it under the Charter. Spain is ready now to cooperate fully in realizing that goal, one that we hope will be achieved by 1995 as the best way of commemorating the Organization's fiftieth anniversary.

Mr. BIEGMAN (Netherlands): Almost precisely a year ago, on 23 November 1992, I had the honour of addressing the Assembly on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

On that occasion I said that the Netherlands would welcome a broad international discussion on the Security Council, and I added that this discussion would, by its very nature, be a sensitive and highly political one.

Since then, the discussion has made a serious start, and I believe it would be wise to approach it in a manner that allows for equal possibilities for input from all Members of the United Nations. For that reason, my delegation will welcome the setting up of an open-ended working group with a relatively wide mandate. It does not strike me as appropriate to limit the working group's mandate to enlargement of the Security Council, since this does not take place in a vacuum. The pressure for change in the composition of the Council is not only the result of the enlargement of the United Nations membership but also - and maybe even more so - due to the enhanced role of the Council, which makes membership much more important and therefore more desirable than before. In the reply of the Netherlands to the request of the Secretary-General for comments on a possible review of the membership of the Security Council my Government did not limit its comments to the issue of membership; it also included some suggestions regarding the working practices of the Council that could bring about more broadly based decision-making. I am happy to note that in the meantime the Council itself has already taken some steps in this direction. Decisions of this kind do not require changes in the Charter.

On the other hand, changes in the composition of the Council, the main aim of our exercise, would of course require amendments of the Charter, for instance in the field of numbers and types of members and provisions with regard to membership mentioned in Article 23. It would also, for example, require the removal of the so-called "enemy" clauses in Articles 53 and 107.

On the issue of the possible enlargement of the Council, I should like to recall my Government's concern that a careful balance be struck between maintaining the effectiveness of the Council and enhancing its representative character. Our future working group will have to keep that balance very much in mind. Both aspects are important. Representativeness relates in particular to the fact that the members of the Security Council discharge their responsibility acting on behalf of the United Nations membership as a whole, as well as to the increase in United Nations membership. Effectiveness is crucial in view of the primary responsibility of the Council for maintaining international peace and security.

Many proposals have been ventilated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/264 and Add.1-4) containing the comments of Member States as well as in the general

debate in the Assembly and in the debates on the current agenda item. The Netherlands is not wedded to a specific proposal, but, in an effort to achieve an equitable solution, we have suggested that thought be given to the creation of semi-permanent membership of the Council for an appropriate category of States for a period exceeding the current term of two years.

The criteria relevant for eligibility for this kind of membership should include, apart from the criteria already mentioned in the Charter, the political weight of the country concerned and the degree to which its membership would contribute to a more equitable geographical distribution of the Council's membership.

We look forward to an exchange of views on this question and related issues in the working group, and the Assembly can count on my delegation's collaboration in the elaboration of a solution that is equitable and fair and that, at the same time, does not undermine the Council's ability to carry out its important tasks.

It is clear that whatever suggestions the working group comes up with, and irrespective of whether or not they require an amendment to the Charter, they can only be viable if they are supported by at least two thirds of the membership of the United Nations, including the permanent members of the Security Council. However, it is my delegation's hope that the result of these endeavours will enjoy the support of all the Members of the United Nations, since they have all, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter, conferred

> "on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security"

and have agreed

> "that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf."

Mr. AROSEMENA (Panama) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I am speaking on behalf of my country as well as the other Central American countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

The adoption of resolution 47/62, which calls on us to comment on equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, was welcomed by the countries of Central America. The international community's unanimous will to review the organ that, within the multilateral system, ponders the most critical issues facing that system, shows that States are convinced that in he future the United Nations will occupy a position of immense responsibility in the world.

The nations of the geographical region I represent have already expressed their point of view, in the responses of their respective Governments to the Secretary-General's request in this regard. However, in the process of clarification, of which this debate marks the beginning, we wish to contribute by expounding on the points on which the responses of those Governments are in accord. Central America is convinced that any review of the Security council's role in the United Nations must necessarily deal with the following concepts.

First, there is representativeness. The San Francisco Conference was a landmark in world history. The inclusion in the Charter of Articles 23 and 24 was one of the most important concessions to reality made over considerations of the sovereignty of States. Two world wars in the space of a generation made it necessary, for the sake of humanity's very existence, to regulate the use of force. But if the decisions of some are to be binding for others, it is essential that those decisions receive the support of those obliged to follow them. Hence, the Security Council must have a more representative composition if its decisions are to be deserving of the support of peoples and Governments. The working methods, decision-making procedures and means of information relating to those decisions must be thoroughly examined from the standpoint of a council, not a cabal. While we understand that the Council must have a size and structure allowing it to act efficiently, it should also be understood that the Council is an organ, not a joint military staff. For these reasons, the Council's size and composition and the authority of its members should respond to the concepts of openness and modernization rather than secrecy and immobility.

Secondly, there is the veto. The matter of permanent membership of the Council and the powers of those members is based on past history. Central America considers it wise to re-examine both these aspects if the Council and its structure are now to move into the future. Thus, a broad examination of these points is called for. That examination will be shaped by the current relations of power in the world, the new nature of threats to world peace and the contribution that all States - not a small group of States - can make to that organ. Good judgement and the ability to contribute to peace-keeping operations are not precious jewels gracing only the fingers of those who look nostalgically to the past.

Thirdly, there is the rationalization of the Council's agenda and the judicial control of its decisions. At present the Council is drowning in problems. Nevertheless, the burden weighing upon the Council is not only the result of the current world situation; it is also the result of its working methods, at once outdated and faulty and

consuming time and energy. In considering this item we must study innovations that allow the more effective use of regional organs, where they exist, and the International Court of Justice, one of the least used organs of the system, in order to unburden the agenda of the organ entrusted primarily with safeguarding peace and security. It is also necessary for the Council, at least in respect of legal questions, to resort to that judicial body established under the Charter.

Fourthly, there is transparency. If the Council's decisions are to be binding for all Members of the United Nations, they should be the product of deliberations by all those Members. As the saying goes: it is not enough to be good; you also have to look good. Access to the Council for the purpose of presenting a viewpoint, understanding the reasons behind a decision and, above all, being well informed on what is being decided are essential ingredients for achieving acceptance of the Council's decisions and actions. The current arrangements, based fundamentally on closed consultations among the permanent members, are no longer acceptable to most countries. Obtaining information on what goes on in the Council is a right of States, not a favour one asks of one's friends. This is one of the most delicate points we shall have to examine if the decisions reached are to contribute to the solution of problems rather than aggravate them.

In the year ahead we shall no doubt see a broad consideration of these and other matters. In the debates we shall offer detailed proposals that present the viewpoints and desires of our peoples and our Governments. We sincerely hope that in those discussions an open-minded attitude, rather than a defensive one, will prevail at all times.

This month we are commemorating a doleful anniversary. Thirty years ago a paladin of progress, scion of a family to which history meted out more than its share of suffering, was slaughtered. One of his brothers, Robert Kennedy, once said that whenever a novel solution to a problem was proposed, he always responded by saying: do not ask why, ask why not. And that will be our guiding principle in the working group that studies the problem of equitable representation on the Security Council.

Mr. MUSUKA (Zambia): Allow me to take this opportunity to express my delegation's sincere thanks to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his lucid report of 20 July 1993 on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. May I also take this opportunity to thank States which responded to the Secretary-General's request for comments. The replies from Member States have lightened our burden in narrowing the parameters of this debate.

From the replies contained in document A/48/264, and from the statement heard so far in the general debate, it is apparent that all are agreed that there is a need for change - not cosmic change, but fundamental change - in the membership and structure of the Security Council to reflect the increased membership of the General Assembly and the changes in the political, economic and military structures which initially were the basis for the establishment of the permanent membership and the veto in the Security Council.

In addressing ourselves to the question of restructuring the Security Council, it is my delegation's belief that we should be guided by the following criteria: first, the provisions of Article 23 (1) of the Charter which accords due importance to "the contribution of members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the organization"; secondly, the fact that Member States confer on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security; thirdly, the principle of the sovereign equality of Member States; and, fourthly, the need to increase efficiency, transparency and accountability.

My delegation attaches great importance to these four concepts as a basis for the democratic restructuring of the Council and other organs of the United Nations.

In the Council's present composition, Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean regions are underrepresented and there is a need to rectify this imbalance by applying the concept of equitable, geographical representation. It is important to note here that now that we are 184 Member States, Africa remains the least represented region.

The Organization of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement both support the restructuring of the Security Council. Underpinning the desire for change in the composition of the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations is the need to implant and nurture the democratic seed in international governance.

My delegation therefore fully supports the establishment of an open-ended working group to consider all aspects of the question of increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council.

In conclusion, my delegation, like so many others that have already spoken, attaches greatest importance to the

question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. My delegation highly commends the President for his tireless efforts in submitting before the plenary session draft resolution A/48/L.28 on a matter which promises to pave the way for a thorough examination of the future composition and operation of the Security Council, a draft resolution which Zambia believes will lead us to some positive discussions and to positive results. I want to associate my delegation with those delegations that have fully supported this draft resolution.

The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I should like to inform members that action on draft resolution A/48/L.28 will be taken at a later date to be announced in the *Journal* once its budget implications have been reviewed.

The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.